

News Release



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Historic Locomotive Repairs Begin at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park

Project Possible Due to New Matching Fund Donor Agreement

JAMESTOWN, Calif. -- Rail fans and visitors to Railtown 1897 State Historic Park (SHP) now have the rare opportunity to see repairs of the historic steam locomotive Sierra No. 28 up close thanks to a newly signed donor agreement that funds work. Visitors are invited to tour the shops to see the work as it progresses, and follow along online at railtown1897.wordpress.com.

Sierra No. 28 has been a mainstay for passenger operations since the facility became a state park in 1982. The locomotive will be repaired while on public display in the historic Roundhouse at Railtown 1897 SHP. Visitors can watch as crews remove and replace corroded and worn out metal parts and inspect and repair the boiler. The total cost to repair Sierra No. 28 is \$231,000 with work being done by both skilled volunteer and paid staff. The project is anticipated to be completed by the summer of 2014.

This repair project was made possible due to a recently finalized California State Parks matching fund partnership donor agreement with the California State Railroad Museum Foundation. In addition to the current Sierra No. 28 repair project, the donor agreement will help keep Railtown 1897 SHP operating. The California State Railroad Museum Foundation has been Railtown 1897 SHP's non-profit partner for over 20 years. The agreement was made possible by the AB 1478 Match Program, which appropriated \$10 million back to State Parks to match contributions by donors and operating partners and also represents an enormous effort by the local community.

As part of the "Keep Railtown Rolling" effort, five Tuolumne County Rotary clubs united with business and community leaders and the California State Railroad Museum to raise the matching funds with the help of a \$75,000 challenge grant from Sonora Area Foundation and the Irving J. Symons Foundation for Tuolumne County, a supporting organization of Sonora Area Foundation.

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“Special thanks go to all of those who love Railtown and have worked tirelessly to keep it operating. It is a vital economic engine for Tuolumne County,” said Kathy Daigle, Executive Director of the California State Railroad Museum Foundation. “It’s been so gratifying to see everyone working together to keep this treasured State Historic Park open. We are pleased that all the funds raised from Sonora Area Foundation, the Rotary Clubs, the community, and rail fans everywhere will be leveraged and matched again to help Railtown better meet its potential now and in the future.”

In addition to maintenance projects, the matching funds will be used for interpretive program development and to enhance the Park’s public and school programs. Funding will also be used to complete National & State Historic Register nominations for locomotives and buildings. Together, these projects will better position the Park to increase visitation, improve revenue generation and demonstrate the Park’s statewide significance.

Behind-the-scenes shop tours are scheduled every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to noon and are free to the public with paid Park admission. Railtown 1897 SHP admission costs are as follows: \$5 for adults, \$3 for youths ages 6-17 and free for children five and under.

Excursion train rides run hourly between 11-3, Saturdays and Sundays through the end of October, with special trains in November and December. Steam excursion train rides are pulled by the Sierra No. 3 on Saturdays, and vintage diesel train rides are offered every Sunday. Train ride tickets include Park admission and are available for advance purchase at www.railtown1897.org as well as at the ticket window beginning at 10 a.m. the day of the train ride (based on availability). Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$8 for youths ages 6-17 and kids five and under are free.

For more information about Railtown 1897 SHP, please call (209) 984-3953 or visit www.railtown1897.org.

About Railtown 1897 State Historic Park

Operated by California State Parks with assistance from the nonprofit California State Railroad Museum Foundation, Railtown 1897 State Historic Park offers year-round tours plus train rides on weekends April-October and on Wednesdays July 10 through August 28, 2013 (selected dates only November-December). Known as “The Movie Railroad,” the Park and its trains have been featured in hundreds of feature films, TV shows, and commercials. The Park is located at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Reservoir Road in Jamestown, reached by highways 49/108. Railtown 1897 State Historic Park is open daily (except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day) and the Park’s operating hours vary by season: April-October, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; November-March, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. For more information, call Railtown 1897 State Historic Park at (209) 984-3953, or visit our Web site at www.railtown1897.org